

**P-SNAP Benefits for Children Certified as Eligible to Receive Free and Reduced Priced School Lunch during School Closures**

**Purpose:**

This instruction sets forth the policy about new legislative authority to provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits to children certified for free or reduced price school lunches whose schools are closed for at least 5 consecutive days during a pandemic emergency designation.

**Scope:**

Sponsors participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

**Description:**

SNAP benefits may be provided to households including children certified as eligible to receive free or reduced price school lunches who are enrolled in a school or school district that will be or has been closed for at least 5 consecutive days due to a pandemic emergency. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will refer to these benefits as P-SNAP.

Please note that delivery of P-SNAP benefits is a State option and is not a requirement or an entitlement. State agencies administering SNAP that wish to provide P-SNAP benefits may provide such benefits to all households including children eligible to receive free or reduced price school lunch or only to those children whose families are already enrolled in SNAP. State authority to provide P-SNAP benefits is available only from October 1, 2009, through September 30, 2010, and only during a period in which the area is designated as under a pandemic emergency.

When a SNAP agency exercises this authority after approval by the Secretary, cooperation among State and local SNAP agencies, the State education agency, and local educational agencies (LEAs) will be required. In order to provide P-SNAP benefits to children eligible to receive free and reduced price school lunches, State or local SNAP agencies will need to obtain basic information on eligible children (e.g., name of head of household, number of eligible children, and address of household) from the LEA. To facilitate delivery of these benefits, Section 746(e) of the Appropriations Act authorizes State agencies and LEAs administering the National School Lunch Program (42 U.S.C. 1751, et seq.) to release to appropriate SNAP officials information about eligible children that attend the affected schools. Please note that children may be eligible for P-SNAP benefits and at the same time be eligible for meals provided through the Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Option under a pandemic

waiver authorized by the recent policy memorandum “Responding to School Closings for H1N1 Outbreaks” (SP-31-2009, SFSP 05-2009).

Due to the recent increase in influenza activity throughout the United States, State agencies must disseminate this information to all LEAs in their States immediately. State agencies with questions about this policy should contact their FNS regional office. We also encourage State education agencies to communicate with their SNAP State agency counterparts as soon as possible to discuss how this new authority may be used to serve affected low-income children in the State.

For your information, we have attached a copy of the implementation memorandum sent to SNAP State agencies. For additional resources on responding to pandemic influenza, see [www.fns.usda.gov/disasters/pandemic/default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/disasters/pandemic/default.htm).

**SOURCE:** SECTION 746 OF PUBLIC LAW 111-80, THE AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010 (SIGNED OCTOBER 21, 2009).